



Top 10 Hidden Spots in Kinosaki Onsen

Insider recommendations to enjoy like a local



Yu no Yama Park, a hidden view of Kinosaki Onsen not known to many tourists.

After hot spring-hopping and enjoying an exquisite *ryokan* meal, travelers to Kinosaki Onsen can enjoy the town like a local by visiting these ten spots:

1. Walk the backroads of Kinosaki

All visitors are familiar with the main willow-lined canal street, but some of Kinosaki's less-traveled roads provide beautiful views as well. Visitors can stroll down [Kiyamachi Street](#) and see gorgeous cherry blossom trees in the beginning of April. Be sure to trek up to the hidden views at [Yu no Yama Park](#) and the red torii gates at Benten Shrine in [Benten Park](#) as well.



2. Relax at a cozy café

Kinosaki Onsen is full of modern, stylish cafés that can help you relax even more during your stay. One of these cafés is [OFF. Kinosaki](#), which first opened in 2018 and became an instant hit with locals and tourists alike. Stop here for a lunch plate with all local and organic ingredients or a scrumptious dessert.



3. Pray at Shisho Shrine

Visit [Shisho Shrine](#), the guardian shrine of Kinosaki Onsen that is said to house the deity that protects the hot spring town and its people. During the warmer months, worshippers have the opportunity to cleanse themselves in a flower-filled *chozuya* (water pavilion) before paying their respects to the enshrined gods while appreciating the colorful blooms floating alongside their hands.



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4. Collect hot spring stamps

Guests participate in a “stamp rally,” as it’s known in Japanese, by purchasing a pamphlet with a map and hopping to stamp collection sections at various accommodations in town. One will find a special stamp for said pamphlet at each bathhouse. Some inns offer the chance to get a commemorative gift for completing this hot spring pilgrimage.

5. Enjoy some local sweets and snacks

Kinosaki’s streets offer many different types of sweets and snacks. For sweets, some local favorites include creamy cheese tarts from Yuagari, limited edition strawberry *daifuku* from Minatoya, and ice cream from [Itaya](#). At Tajimagyu Delica Chaya, try a *Tajima gyuman*, a bun filled with Tajima beef, or a *kaniman*, a bun filled with crab.



6. Soak in the town’s footbaths

Within Kinosaki Onsen, there are 5 [footbaths](#) located throughout town: outside of Satono-yu, outside of Yanagi-yu, near Ichino-yu, near the Ropeway, and outside of the Kinosaki Literature Museum. Free to use, these footbaths are perfect for refreshing tired feet. The Kinosaki Literature Museum offers gentle handbaths as well!

7. Observe the fish markets

As Kinosaki Onsen is close to the Sea of Japan, fishermen sell their catches to the fish markets and eateries in town. The area is especially known for winter snow crab. One shop named [Okesho Fish Market](#) was established in 1925 when the grandmother of the current owner began selling fish to support her family. Choose from any one of the fresh fish on sale on the first floor and Okesho will prepare and serve it to you upstairs.



8. Hike up Mt. Daishi

Mt. Daishi presents a [hiking course](#) through the lush forest in the back of town with a dense tree canopy and little stone guardians. Visitors can hike 15 minutes up halfway to Onsenji Temple, or 45 minutes all the way to the top of the mountain. The hot springs in town below provide a great place to rest afterwards.

9. Bike to the Genbudo Caves

[Rent a bicycle](#) from the SOZORO Kinosaki Information Center, located right across the street from Kinosaki Onsen Station. Ride across and then along the Maruyama River to reach the Genbudo Caves in about 20 minutes. Genbudo is a sight to behold, with 5 caves made of columnar joints that formed over 1.6 million years ago.



10. Explore one of the nearby towns

Kinosaki Onsen has much to offer, but we would also recommend visiting one of the [nearby towns](#). The area is home to Izushi, the historic castle town; Takeno, the retro beach town; Toyooka, a downtown hub home to bag-making and the Oriental White Stork; Kannabe, the green highlands; and Tanto, the quiet countryside.





[Kinosaki Onsen](#) is a town of time-honored hot springs dating back 1300 years ago. It is home to seven public bathhouses, all located within walking distance of each other and the train station. Guests are encouraged to wear yukata and geta, stroll through the town, and go onsen-hopping.

[Toyooka](#) is a downtown area home to the Oriental White Stork, a bird that was revived from extinction in this very town. The city's efforts restored the Oriental White Stork population, and now over 250 fly the skies of Japan. Toyooka is also known for the Genbudo Caves.



[Izushi](#) is the resident castle town, popular for its nostalgic atmosphere of Edo-era Japan. It is home to many interesting attractions such as castle ruins, a samurai house, a kabuki theater, and a clock tower. The town's specialty is Izushi Sara Soba, buckwheat noodles served in small portions on small plates.

[Kannabe](#) is a mountainous area with fun activities year-round. In the winter, one can go skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, and sledding. In the warm months, one can go camping, paragliding, fishing, tree climbing, and more. Kannabe is the perfect destination for adventurers.



[Takeno](#) is a quaint fisherman town that is a hidden gem among the northern coast of Hyogo Prefecture. The beach has clear, blue waters while the mountains surrounding it offer great hiking opportunities. It is encouraged to stroll through the peaceful town, where one can find small shops and traditional landscapes.

[Tanto](#) is a quiet countryside town with magnificent nature—including a giant field of tulips in the spring and brilliant red-leaved trees in the fall.

